

# Lesson Plan:

## Expressing regret & wishes ("if only")

| LEVEL            | TIME          | FOCUS                                                                    |
|------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Advanced (C1/C2) | 60–90 minutes | grammar (subjunctive), vocabulary (emotions, regrets), speaking, writing |

### Objectives

By the end of the lesson, students will:

- Understand the grammatical structure of "if only" for regrets and hypothetical wishes.
- Use "if only" correctly in past, present, and future contexts.
- Improve fluency by discussing personal and imagined situations.

### Materials

- Whiteboard/Markers or Slides
- Handouts with practice activities
- Audio/Video clip (optional) showing natural use of "if only"
- Scenario cards for speaking activity

### Lesson Procedure

#### 1. Warm-Up (10 mins)

##### Activity:

Ask students:

- What's something small you regret from this morning? This week? This year?

Write responses on the board and highlight how they express regret. Then ask:

- How could you express that regret more emotionally or formally?

Transition to:

"We often use 'if only' to express regret or longing in a more dramatic or emotional way."

## 2. Explanation and Form (15 mins)

Present the structure of "if only":

| Time Reference     | Structure              | Example                       |
|--------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Past regret        | If only + past perfect | If only I had studied harder. |
| Present regret     | If only + past simple  | If only I knew his number.    |
| Future wish/desire | If only + would        | If only he would listen.      |

Emphasize:

- Difference between **regret (past)** and **wish (future)**
- "If only" often implies **strong emotion** (frustration, sadness, hope)

## 3. Controlled Practice (10-15 mins)

**Worksheet - Complete the sentences:**

1. If only I \_\_\_\_\_ (not/eat) so much cake.
2. If only we \_\_\_\_\_ (have) more time today.
3. If only he \_\_\_\_\_ (call) me back last night.

**Peer check, then class correction.**

## 4. Listening/Speaking Activity (Optional - 10 mins)

**Audio/Video Clip (TV scene, interview, or speech):**

Students listen and identify any uses of "if only".

**Discuss** the emotional weight and meaning.

## 5. Communicative Practice (15-20 mins)

**Scenario Cards (in pairs or groups):**

- A student failed an exam.
- A person missed a flight.
- Someone argued with a friend.
- A team lost a big match.

**Task:** Discuss what the person might say using "if only".

**Sample output:**

- If only I had double-checked the gate number!

- If only she wouldn't be so stubborn.

Encourage creativity and emotional expression.

## 6. Writing Task (10-15 mins)

Students write a short paragraph (6-8 sentences) about a personal or imagined regret using "if only" at least twice.

Optional extension: Write a dialogue between two characters reflecting on a shared regret.

## 7. Wrap-Up and Recap (5 mins)

Quick recap:

- When do we use "if only"?
- What does it express?
- What's the difference between "if only I had" and "if only he would"?

Ask for **volunteers** to share one sentence or paragraph.

## Homework

Write a journal entry titled "*If only I could go back...*" (150-200 words)